

[English]

Production/Consumption of Gold

480. SHRI ANNASHIB M.K. PATIL: Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state:

(a) the estimated production and consumption of gold in the country during the last three years in terms of quantum and value and percentage increase/decrease;

(b) the production targets for 1997-98 and additional investment in ongoing/new projects—both in public sector and private sector;

(c) whether the Government have proposed to allow private/foreign participation in Gold Mines;

(d) if so, the details thereof along with proposals received/cleared; and

(e) the details of new Gold reserves located in the country by GSI and steps taken/proposed to Mine these reserves?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL AND MINISTER OF MINES (SHRI BIRENDRA PRASAD BAISHYA): (a) The details of the estimated production of gold in the country during the last three years in terms of quantum, value and percentage increase/decrease is indicated below:-

Year	Gold Production Quantity (Kgs.)	Value (Rs. in crores)	Increase/Decrease in Quantity (in Percentage)
1994-95	2369	116	+14
1995-96	2036	103	-14
1996-97	2904	145	+43

As far as consumption of gold in India is concerned, no official data is available. However, a very rough estimate suggests that the demand for gold in India is about 600 Tonnes per annum.

(b) At present, gold is produced primarily in the Public Sector. The target of gold production for 1997-98 is 3140 Kgs. The approved Plan outlay for 1997-98 for M/s. Bharat Gold Mines Limited (BGML) in this regard is Rs. 6 crores. To augment the gold production as a byproduct by M/s. Hindustan Copper Limited (HCL), an investment of Rs. 5 crores has been proposed in the IXth Five Year Plan. M/s. Hutt Gold Mines Limited (HGML), a Karnataka State Government Undertaking engaged in production of gold, has a plan to increase gold production to 3600 Kgs. per annum.

(c) Under the National Mineral Policy, 1993, 13 minerals including Gold which were hitherto reserved for exploitation by the public sector were also thrown open for private sector participation, both domestic and foreign. Now, any company incorporated in India, is eligible for grant

of Prospecting Licence/Mining Lease for exploration/exploitation of Gold in the Country. Further, Government have issued guidelines for grant of Prospecting Licence for area larger than 25 square kilometer in cases involving aerial survey.

(d) So far, the following two proposals have been approved by the Foreign Investment Promotion Board (FIPB):

(i) Hindustan Zinc Limited & BHP Minerals, Australia with 60% foreign equity for prospecting of Gold, among other base metals.

(ii) Australian India Resources N.L., Australia for 100% subsidiary unit for exploration/exploitation of Gold. No Prospecting Licence/Mining Lease has been granted to these Companies so far.

(e) Geological Survey of India (GSI) has located new deposits of gold in Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Karnataka, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh. The details are as follows:-

Andhra Pradesh:- (i) Dona Temple Block, Kurnool District, (ii) Kotnapalle Block, Anantpur District, (iii) Kudithanpalle Block, Chittoor District.

Bihar:- (i) Sonapet Valley and Tamar Porapahar in Babikundi and Taramba area.

Karnataka:- Hira-Buddini, Raichur District, (ii) Chinmulgund, Dharwar District, (iii) Nagavi, Dharwar District, (iv) Aijanhalli West Block, Tumkur District, (v) G.R. Halli, South Block, Chitradurga District.

Kerala:- (i) Kappil Sector, Mallapuram District.

Madhya Pradesh:- (i) Gurharpahar West, Sidhi District.

Maharashtra:- (i) Paraspro West Block, Nagpur District.

Rajasthan:- (i) Anantpur-Bhukia, Banswara District.

Uttar Pradesh:- (i) Gurharpahar area, Sidhi Belt, Sonbhadra District.

Any exploration/exploitation agency is free to exploit the mineral reserves after getting Prospecting Licence/Mining Lease in accordance with the provisions of Mines & Minerals (Regulation & Development) Act, 1957 and the Rules made thereunder and in the light of the National Mineral Policy, 1993 announced by the Government of India.

Development of Habib-Ganj Railway Station

5158. SHRI SUSHIL CHANDRA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the development of the Habibganj railway station (Central Railway in Madhya Pradesh) is being impeded because the State Government has not been able to remove the 'Jhuggis' and other encroachments on the land of the railway station; and